

## Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W

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R 260933Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9481

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 13037

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: CAPTURE OF LEADING FILIPINO COMMUNIST "COMMANDER DANTE"

1. PHILIPPINE CONSTABULARY ANNOUNCED AUG. 26 THAT  
CONSTABULARY HAS CAPTURED BERNABE BUSCAYO, ALIAS "COMMANDER DANTE",  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA) MILITARY  
ARM OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES MARXIST/  
LENIST (CPP/ML). CONSTABULARY TROOPERS REPORTEDLY  
SURPRISED DANTE PLUS WIFE, TWO-WEEK OLD CHILD AND  
NINE "AIDES" SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT AUG. 25 WHILE  
THEY WERE SLEEPING IN A HUT IN A SUGAR CANE FIELD NEAR  
MEXICO, PAMPANGA. LOCATION IS ONLY FOUR KILOMETERS  
FROM MAJOR CONSTABULARY BASE AT CAMP OLIVAS. TROOPS  
MAKING CAPTURE WERE PERSONALLY LED BY FIRST PC ZONE  
COMMANDER, GENERAL GATAN, ACCORDING ANNOUNCEMENT  
WHICH WAS MADE BY GATAN. STORY WAS SPASHED  
ACROSS FRONT PAGES OF EVENING PAPERS. FURTHER  
ANNOUNCEMENT FROM PALACE, PERHAPS FOLLOWING "DANTE"  
MEETING WITH MARCOS, IS EXPECTED SHORTLY.

2. COMMENT: POSSIBILITY CANNOT BE RULED OUT THAT  
WE ARE WITNESSING A PARTICULARLY ELABORATE STAGE  
SHOW. FACT THAT BUSCAYO CAPTURED WITHOUT A FIGHT  
IS SUSPICIOUS ON FACE OF IT. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED  
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IF HE SHOWS UP AS NEW STAR WITNESS AT ONGOING TRIAL

OF HIS OLD PROTECTOR, SENATOR AQUINO, IN WHICH DANTE  
IS INCIDENTALLY A CO-DEFENDANT.

3. WHETHER "DANTE" WAS BOUGHT OR CAPTURED, HIS  
APPREHENSION IS SIGNIFICANT. HE WAS THE BIGGEST NAME  
IN THE PARTY AFTER ITS CHAIRMAN, JOSE MARIO SISON,  
HOLDING POSITIONS AS CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND POLIBURO  
MEMBER, AS WELL AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF NPA. ABOUT  
35 YEARS OLD, HE WAS A FORMER HUK WHO NEVER COMPLETED  
HIGH SCHOOL AND NEVER FELT ENTIRELY COMFORTABLE WITH  
EX-STUDENT LEADER INTELLECTUALS WHO CAME TO DOMINATE  
THE PARTY LEADERSHIP IN PERIOD BEFORE MARTIAL LAW.

4. EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER AS INFO AVAILABLE.  
SULLIVAN

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARRESTS, PARTY LEADERS, COMMUNISTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ellisoob  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**TAGS:** PINS, RP  
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